

# NAVAL SPECIAL WARFARE

## History of Naval Special Warfare

Today's Naval Special Warfare commandos can trace their origins to the Scouts and Raiders, Naval Combat Demolition Units, Office of Strategic Services Operational Swimmers, Underwater Demolition Teams, and Motor Torpedo Boat Squadrons of World War II. While none of these early organizations have survived to present, their pioneering efforts in beach reconnaissance, underwater demolition and unconventional warfare are mirrored in the missions and professionalism of present-day Naval Special Warfare forces -- Navy SEALs (SEa, Air, Land), SEAL Delivery Vehicle Teams and Special Warfare Combatant-craft Crewmen (SWCC).

## Naval Special Warfare Today

Naval Special Warfare Command is the Navy's special operations force and the naval component to United States Special Operations Command. Naval Special Warfare organizes, trains, equips and deploys its Squadrons to meet the training, exercise, contingency, and wartime requirements of the regional commanders, Theater Special Operations Commands and numbered fleets located around the world.

NSW Squadrons are built around entire SEAL Teams deploying and include their senior leadership, SEAL Vehicle Delivery Teams and Special Boat Teams, as well as personnel detachments such as mobile communications teams, tactical cryptologic support and explosive ordnance disposal. Additionally, they receive support from permanently deployed NSW units overseas.

NSW forces can operate independently or in conjunction with other U.S. Special Operations Forces or within U.S. Navy Carrier Battle Groups and Amphibious Ready Groups. There are approximately 5,000 total active duty personnel -- including 2,200 SEALs and 600 SWCC -- within the NSW community.

***"My priority is squarely and directly on the global war on terrorism and what we in Naval Special Warfare can do to eliminate the threat."***

***RDML Bert Calland, Commander, Naval Special Warfare Command***

Today's enemy is dispersed and more elusive than any previously known. Terrorists do not adhere to geographic boundaries and do not have rigid campaign timetables. They are patient. Fighting and ultimately winning the war on terrorism will depend on small, flexible, responsive and adaptive military organizations like Naval Special Warfare.

In addition to being experts in special reconnaissance and direct action missions -- the skill sets needed to combat terrorism -- NSW is postured to fight a dispersed enemy on their turf, to interdict enemy forces, ashore or afloat before they can act. NSW forces can operate in small groups from 4 to 8 to 16 or more (depending on the mission) and have a continuous overseas global presence with their ability to quickly deploy from Navy ships, submarines and aviation platforms, overseas bases and NSW's forward-based units.

Immediately following the attacks on America Sept. 11, 2001, Naval Special Warfare forces put operators on the ground in Afghanistan. The first U.S. military flag officer to set foot in Afghanistan was a Navy SEAL in charge of all special operations for Central Command. Additionally, a Navy SEAL captain commanded Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force (CJSOTF) South. Commonly referred to as Task Force K-BAR, the task force included U.S. Navy, Army, Air Force and Coalition SOF forces. During Operation Enduring Freedom, NSW forces carried out more than 75 special reconnaissance and direct action missions, destroying more than 500,000 pounds of explosives and weapons; positively identifying enemy personnel and conducting Leadership Interdiction Operations in the search for terrorists trying to escape by sea-going vessels.



Naval Special Warfare has played a significant role in Operation Iraqi Freedom, employing the largest number of SEALs and SWCC in its history. NSW forces were instrumental in numerous special reconnaissance and direct action missions including the securing of the southern oil infrastructures of the Al Faw peninsula and the off-shore gas and oil terminals; the clearing of the Khor Al Abdullah and Khor Az Zubayar waterways that enabled humanitarian aid to be delivered to the vital port city of Umm Qasr; reconnaissance of the Shat Al Arab waterway; capture of high value targets, raids on suspected chemical, biological and radiological sites; and the first POW rescue since WWII. Additionally, NSW is also fighting the war on terrorism in other global hot spots including the Philippines and the Horn of Africa.

***America's Force to Combat Global Terrorism***